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Communications in crisis and emergency situations (Experience of Participation in International IAEA Exercises ConvEx)

Situation and Crisis Center of Rosatom

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October 05-09, 2026

The Role of Rosatom SCC in the International Nuclear Emergency Preparedness and Response System (EPR)

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1998

The Situation and Crisis Center of Rosatom was established as an expert-analytical center to support decision-making by the leadership of the nuclear industry in both routine and emergency situations.

Main task:

To ensure 24/7 monitoring and control of nuclear industry facilities and to provide information and analytical support to the industry leadership.

IAEA

As part of fulfilling the **Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident (1986)** and the **Convention on Assistance in the Case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency (1986)**, the SCC functions as the National Warning Point (NWP) within the IAEA's Emergency Notification and Assistance System

The SCC participates in international conferences, seminars, training activities, and all exercises and drills conducted annually by the IAEA Incident and Emergency Centre (IEC) as part of the ConvEx series (4–8 exercises per year).

*In accordance with the Order of the Ministry of Atomic Energy of the Russian Federation dated October 15, 1998, No. 676

Description of ConvEx Exercise Types in the IAEA International Emergency System

ConvEx (Convention Exercises) – are exercises designed to test the operational mechanisms under::

- Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident;
- Convention on Assistance in the Case of a Nuclear or Radiological Emergency.

ConvEx-1

Testing emergency communication lines with national contact points, ensuring 24/7 availability and checking response times.

ConvEx-2

Low to medium intensity exercises based on hypothetical scenarios; testing parts of the international EPR system (communications, international assistance, assessment and forecasting).

ConvEx-3

Full-scale exercises to assess the international emergency response mechanisms and capabilities in a severe nuclear or radiological emergency. Operations are conducted 24/7 over 2–3 days.

SCC Functions During ConvEx Exercises

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1. Acting as the National Warning Point within the IAEA's Emergency Notification and Assistance System
2. Receiving, logging, and analyzing emergency notifications at nuclear facilities
3. Assessing the status of the nuclear facility and radiological conditions at the site during an emergency
4. Coordinating communication and notifications with the IAEA IEC
5. Providing systematized collection, comprehensive analysis, and presentation of information

Formation of the SCC Working Group for Cooperation with the IAEA IEC

- Duty Shift of UM&ER (UM&ER = Unit of Monitoring and Emergency Response)
- Heads of UM&ER
- Sectoral Scientific and Methodological Center for Nuclear and Radiation Safety

NOVEMBER 2020

To improve the efficiency of the National Warning Point and analytical support for Rosatom's competent bodies, a Working Group (WG) was formed to liaise with the IAEA Incident and Emergency Centre.

- Duty Shift of UM&ER
- Heads of UM&ER
- Sectoral Scientific and Methodological Center for Nuclear and Radiation Safety

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- Working Group for Cooperation with the IAEA IEC (comprising members of UM&ER and the Emergency Information and Analytical Center)

*(Based on Order No. 673/119-od dated November 3, 2020)

WG Responsibilities in Interaction with the IAEA IEC

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Key Tasks:

- Training and maintaining competencies of WG members to work effectively with IAEA's information-analytical tools:
  - •USIE Web Portal
  - •RANET (Response Assistance Network)
  - •IRMIS, EPRIMS, and others
- Organizing internal drills and exercises using IAEA tools and participation in external emergency preparedness exercises
- Translating IAEA and international communications into Russian
- Preparing analytical and reference materials during crises, drills, and providing proposals to Rosatom leadership

During exercises, the WG:

- Translates incoming information from English to Russian
- Analyzes data
- Communicates with exercise participants
- Fills out EMERCON forms in both Russian and English
- Transfers information to competent authorities and duty dispatch services

SCC WG Achievements

Integration and use of IAEA-recommended tools.

Response and Assistance Network (RANET)

Integrated system for coordinating international assistance in the event of nuclear or radiological incidents and emergencies (receiving and evaluating the request, fact-finding, deploying teams of specialists and providing assistance). RANET allows to request support in the area: decontamination; dose assessment; sampling and analysis; medical support; nuclear installation assessment and advice; radiation survey; radiological assessment and advice; source search and recovery.

NSS OUI (Nuclear Safety and Security Online User Interface)

An online interface designed to facilitate access to IAEA publication series. It features user-friendly navigation, integrated links to IAEA Glossary terminology, advanced thematic search capabilities, and a feedback option.

The “IAEA Assessment and Prognosis Tools” system (IECAT – IEC Assessment and Prognosis Tools)

Developed to assist in the process of gathering critical information during an emergency at a nuclear power or research reactor. It provides a high-level assessment of critical safety functions during an emergency for various reactor technologies (BWR, PWR, VVER, PHWR, AGR, etc.). A step-by-step evaluation of different reactor safety systems is performed, resulting in a graphical interface output that displays the current status.

* In accordance with the recommendations of the Practical Manual for Assessment and Prognosis during a Nuclear or Radiological Emergency – EPR-A&P-2019.

SCC WG Achievements

During the functioning of SCC WG new instruments recommended by the IAEA were studied and put into operation:

IAEA Emergency Preparedness and Response Information Management System (EPRIMS)

A tool for conducting self-assessment of a country's EPR (Emergency Preparedness and Response) capabilities in accordance with IAEA safety standards, and for assessments of nuclear infrastructure and public management in EPR.. It enables Member States to share information about their EPR capacities for nuclear and radiological emergencies during the preparedness phase.

PRIS (Power Reactor Information System)

Comprehensive database focusing on nuclear power plants worldwide. PRIS contains information on power reactors in operation, under construction, or those being decommissioned.

The database covers:

- Reactor specification data (status, location, operator, owner, suppliers, milestone dates) and technical design characteristics.
- Performance data including energy production and energy loss data, outage and operational event information.

Calian Response Ready

An industry-leading platform for designing, conducting, and evaluating highly realistic exercises. The platform enables simulation of messages published in the media and on social networks. The interface is designed to closely replicate the functionality of media platforms such as "X" and Facebook, as well as to emulate the features of any content management system.

SCC WG Results

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ConvEx:

- ✓ **ConvEx-2a:** 5 times annually since 2021
- ✓ **ConvEx-2b:** 6 times
- ✓ **ConvEx-2c:** 2 times (2023 and 2024)
- ✓ **ConvEx-3:** 2 times (2021 and 2025)

- ✓ **Total:** 15 international exercises in cooperation with IAEA IEC*



Participation in national exercises at nuclear power plants (NPPs)

- ✓ **2021:** 3 full-scale emergency drills at Russian NPPs
- ✓ **2022:** 1 full-scale and 3 command-post drills
- ✓ **2023:** 8 full-scale and 1 command-post drills
- ✓ **2024:** 8 full-scale and 1 command-post drills
- ✓ **2025**: 8 full-scale and 1 command-post drills
- ✓ **2026**: 4 full-scale emergency drills at Russian NPPs

- ✓ **Total:** 39 events*



Participation in conferences, seminars, and webinars held under the auspices of the IAEA.

In 6 years, the SCC WG has participated in over **50 events** at NPPs in Russia and abroad.

- According to one of the IAEA reports, Russia was among the eight countries that achieved the goals of the exercise

* since SCC WG came into being in 2020

From SCC WG to an industry-specific communication platform

During the work process a new tool for **horizontal cooperation** was created and put into practice among representatives:

- Rosatom (The Competent Authority's functions)
- SCC (The National Warning Point's functions)
- JSC "Rosenergoatom", RPA "Typhoon", Federal Medical Biophysical Center named after A.I. Burnazyan, Nuclear Safety Institute of the Russian Academy of Sciences (expert organizations)

An industry-specific communication platform ensures prompt and effective **on-line cooperation** between the participants

Prospects for Further WG Activities

- Continued **training and exercises** with IAEA IEC and national contact points
  - Participation in domestic and international drills and meetings to refine procedures and collaboration mechanisms.
  - Ongoing participation in IAEA training courses and workshops on emergency preparedness and response (EPR).
  - Continued cooperation, taking into account the changing EPR' landscape in the face of the emergence of new challenges, such as the expansion of technologies and areas of application of nuclear energy, armed conflicts, cyber attacks, disinformation, etc.
- Implementation of **new IAEA-recommended tools** for nuclear and radiological emergency preparedness.
- Participation in the **development of the USIE-website** (WG acted as a focus group in the process of website modernizing).
- Participation in planned exercises **ConvEx-3** in 2029.

Thank you for your attention!

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October 05-09, 2026